

Message Text

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ACTION ARA-20

INFO OCT-01 ISO-00 SCI-06 SS-15 PM-07 L-03 RSC-01 DRC-01

SSO-00 /054 W

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FM AMEMBASSY BUENOS AIRES

TO SECSTATE WASHDC IMMEDIATE 3795

C O N F I D E N T I A L BUENOS AIRES 7230

STADIS//////////

E.O. 11652: GDS

TAGS: TSPA, AR

SUBJECT: VANGUARD OPERATIONS

REF: BA 7187, KREBS/MORRIS (NASA) TELCON OCT 2

1. FOR REASONS WHICH FOLLOW, EMBASSY CONTINUES TO BELIEVE THERE IS NO FEASIBLE ALTERNATIVE TO RETENTION OF PRESENT MODE OF OPERATIONS IN CURRENT SITUATION.

2. PRESENT AGREEMENT UNDER WHICH VANGUARD OPERATES HERE SPECIFIES PORT OF MAR DEL PLATA. ANY CHANGE IN SITE WOULD REQUIRE NEW AGREEMENT, NEGOTIATION OF WHICH WOULD CERTAINLY REQUIRE SEVERAL WEEKS AT LEAST. MOREOVER, NAVAL AUTHORITIES WITH WHOM NEW ARRANGEMENTS WOULD HAVE TO BE NEGOTIATED, TAKE VIEW BASED ON THEIR OWN INTELLIGENCE REPORTS THAT PRESENT THREAT DOES NOT INDICATE ANY CHANGE NECESSARY. THEY ARE IN A POSITION BY NATURE OF INTELLIGENCE SOURCES TO HAVE ADVANCE KNOWLEDGE OF ANY CHANGE IN NATURE OF THREAT. SHOULD FUTURE INFORMATION INDICATE BROADER THREAT, THEY WOULD WANT TO COOPERATE FULLY TO AVOID RISK SINCE IT IS IN THEIR INTEREST NOT TO HAVE ANY INCIDENT OCCUR.

3. POLITICALLY, REQUEST FOR NEW ARRANGEMENTS WOULD BE ILL-ADVISED. GOA SECURITY COOPERATION HAS BEEN ALL WE CAN REASONABLY EXPECT AND REQUEST FOR CHANGE WOULD CERTAINLY

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BE VIEWED AS INDICATIVE OF LACK OF CONFIDENCE ON OUR PART IN

THEIR ABILITY TO ACCURATELY ASSESS AND CONTROL SITUATION.
IT WOULD BE PARTICULARLY IRRITATING TO ARGENTINE NAVY, WHICH
HAS PRINCIPAL SECURITY ROLE FOR VANGUARD, SINCE THEY PROVIDED
US WITH INFORMATION ON THREAT TO THIELE.

4. LOGISTICALLY, A CHANGE WOULD OPEN UP A HOST OF QUESTIONS
NOT EASILY RESOLVED. BERTHING SPACE ELSEWHERE IS EXTREMELY
LIMITED. EMBASSY IS STRONGLY OF OPINION THAT BUENOS AIRES
SHOULD NOT EVEN BE CONSIDERED BECAUSE SECURITY THREAT HERE
WOULD BE MANY TIMES GREATER THAN IN MAR DEL PLATA. USE OF
OTHER PORTS WOULD INVOLVE EITHER COMMERCIAL OR NAVAL DOCK
SPACE, WITH RESULTANT UNCERTAINTIES OF ACCESS AT ANY PARTICULAR
TIME. NEW FUELING ARRANGEMENTS AND ACQUISITION OF DOCK SPACE
FOR RESUPPLY ELSEWHERE, AS WELL AS SHIP CHANDLERING AND AGENT
SERVICES, WOULD HAVE TO BE RE-EXPLORED AND RE-NEGOTIATED,
ASSUMING THEY ARE AVAILABLE.

5. WITH RESPECT TO PROPOSED TOTAL OPERATION AT SEA, ENDING
ROTATION OF CREW AND SENDING FAMILIES BACK TO US, THIS, LIKE
CHANGE IN PORT, IN EFFECT WOULD BE POLITICALLY UNWISE SINCE IT
WOULD IMPUGN JUDGMENT OF NAVAL AUTHORITIES WITH RESPECT TO
SERIOUSNESS OF THE THREAT. IT WOULD ALSO HAVE ADVERSE AND
UNNECESSARY ECONOMIC IMPACT ON HOST CITY OF MAR DEL PLATA,
BESIDES RAISING SERIOUS PUBLIC-RELATIONS PROBLEMS IN
EXPLAINING MOTIVE FOR CHANGE.

6. THIELE AND MASSA DEPARTING BRANIFF 978 EVENING OCT 3, ARRIVING
WASHINGTON VIA BEGIN UNDERLINE NATIONAL 100 1030 HOURS END
UNDERLINE OCT 4.
LODGE

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Message Attributes

Automatic Decaptioning: X
Capture Date: 01 JAN 1994
Channel Indicators: n/a
Current Classification: UNCLASSIFIED
Concepts: n/a
Control Number: n/a
Copy: SINGLE
Draft Date: 03 OCT 1973
Decaption Date: 01 JAN 1960
Decaption Note:
Disposition Action: RELEASED
Disposition Approved on Date:
Disposition Authority: golinofr
Disposition Case Number: n/a
Disposition Comment: 25 YEAR REVIEW
Disposition Date: 28 MAY 2004
Disposition Event:
Disposition History: n/a
Disposition Reason:
Disposition Remarks:
Document Number: 1973BUENOS07230
Document Source: CORE
Document Unique ID: 00
Drafter: n/a
Enclosure: n/a
Executive Order: GS LODGE
Errors: N/A
Film Number: n/a
From: BUENOS AIRES
Handling Restrictions: n/a
Image Path:
ISecure: 1
Legacy Key: link1973/newtext/t19731054/aaaabnym.tel
Line Count: 91
Locator: TEXT ON-LINE
Office: ACTION ARA
Original Classification: CONFIDENTIAL
Original Handling Restrictions: n/a
Original Previous Classification: n/a
Original Previous Handling Restrictions: n/a
Page Count: 2
Previous Channel Indicators:
Previous Classification: CONFIDENTIAL
Previous Handling Restrictions: n/a
Reference: BA 7187, KREBS/MORRIS (NASA) TELCON, OCT 2
Review Action: RELEASED, APPROVED
Review Authority: golinofr
Review Comment: n/a
Review Content Flags:
Review Date: 15 JAN 2002
Review Event:
Review Exemptions: n/a
Review History: RELEASED <15-Jan-2002 by shawdg>; APPROVED <06-Feb-2002 by golinofr>
Review Markings:

Declassified/Released
US Department of State
EO Systematic Review
30 JUN 2005

Review Media Identifier:
Review Referrals: n/a
Review Release Date: n/a
Review Release Event: n/a
Review Transfer Date:
Review Withdrawn Fields: n/a
Secure: OPEN
Status: NATIVE
Subject: VANGUARD OPERATIONS
TAGS: TSPA, AR
To: STATE
Type: TE
Markings: Declassified/Released US Department of State EO Systematic Review 30 JUN 2005